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NSC BRIEFING

25 March 1954

MILITARY SITUATION AT DIEN BIEN PHU

- I. Viet Minh preparing assault.
 - A. Moving trenches closer.
 - B. Some within 300 meters.
- II. French making air, some ground attacks.
 - A. 1,000 pound bombs on trenches.
 - B. But enemy repairs, digs new ones.
 - C. French patrolling between strongpoints.
 - 1. Destroyed one company on 22nd north of Isabelle.
- III. Defenses tightened in center.
 - A. Consolidation "Anne Marie" with "Huguette".
 - B. ~~Estimated~~ ^{TENDED} upset detailed enemy planning.

NSA review completed

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C. About 7,000 miles barbed wire
AT DIEN BIEN PHU
strung^A-- distance from Saigon
to Paris.

IV. French think enemy may hit "Isabelle"
first, then center.

A. Division 316, with element 304,
to hit south, *FRENCH THINK*

B. Division 308 expected^A attack
BY FRENCH TO
center.

V. Navarre more optimistic.

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VI. On other hand, heavy Chinese shipments
via Lai Chau.

OPENED IN JANUARY
A. New route from Ban Leng^A takes
strain off supply lines from east.

B. French say have killed 1,200 on
road last week.

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C. Press reports of starving enemy
conflict with estimated 60 days
supplies, which we believe more
likely.

VII. Evacuation of French wounded hampered.

A. About 200 flown out; probably
equal number remains. About
^{Total}
1400 losses.

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On 23 March Lt. Gambiez was killed
when helicopter evacuating him was hit and
crashed. He had been slightly wounded in the
knee the day before. He was only son of Gen.

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Gambiez, Navarre's Chief of Staff

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